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Oriya tracts in the Presidency.

609 Q.—Sriman Sasibhushan Rath Mahasayo: Seeing that the population of Berhampur and Ichchapuram taluks, Ganjam district, is preponderatingly Oriya (vide G.O. No. 103, Public, dated 4th February 1922), will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state how and why these taluks do not appear in the list of Oriya tracts in appendix II of G.O. No. 658, dated 15th August 1922—Public Service—Communal Representation?

A.—The Government do not admit the correctness of the assumption on which the question is based.

Sriman Sasibhushan Rath Mahasayo :—"Do the Government admit the correctness of the figures in G.O. No. 103 referred to in this question?"

The hon. Sir Charles Todhunter :—"I ask for notice, Sir."

Administration of land customs in the Pondicherry border.

610 Q.—Mr. K. Sitarama Reddiyar: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact

(1) that groups of British villages in the frontiers of Pondicherry are entirely surrounded by French villages and similarly some French villages by British villages;

(2) that in some border villages a portion of a house is British and the other French;

(3) that the British subject who goes to purchase vegetables such as plantains and coconuts in an adjacent French village has to take the things so purchased to the British Customs to get them assessed to duty, the Customs office being sometimes situated at a distance of four or five miles from his residence;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that British goods worth more than Rs. 10 cannot directly pass on to their destination, whether British or French, but should go via a land customs British chauki which in many cases is at a great distance from the direct route;

(*c*) whether it is a fact that on account of these land customs duties much hardship is felt by the subjects of both British and French villages situated on the frontier;

(*d*) whether it is a fact that great discontent and agitation prevail in the frontier villages for the relaxation of the rules applicable to land customs;

(*e*) whether there is any proposal to mitigate this trouble caused in the administration of land customs; and

(*f*) whether there is any proposal on the part of Government to cancel land customs duty at least on the produce and indigenous manufactures in these frontiers?

A.—(*a*), (*b*) & (*c*) The statement of the facts is to all intents and purposes correct.

(*d*) The condition of affairs described has prevailed for a great many years and the Government are not aware of any recent discontent or agitation.

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(e) Proposals in connexion with the matter have been under consideration for several years past, but it is one beset with many difficulties.

(f) The proposition in question is under examination with the rest.

Cost of Survey, Settlement and Land Record operations in Tanjore district.

611 Q.—Mr. T. Somasundara Mudaliyar: Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state the cost of Survey, Settlement and Land Record operations in the Tanjore district for the introduction of resettlement up to date, and also the probable expenditure in connexion with the same till the work is closed in the district?

A.—The hon. Member is referred to G.O. No. 1730, dated 23rd September 1922, which is placed on the Editors' Table. No further information is available.

II

ACT ASSENTED TO BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

The hon. the President:—"I have to inform the House that the Madras Port Trust (Amendment) Act, 1922, which was passed at the meeting of the Council held on the 17th November 1922, has received the assent of His Excellency the Governor on the 14th December 1922."

III

COMMUNICATION TO THE COUNCIL.

The Secretary laid on the table the * proceedings of the thirteenth meeting for 1922-23 of the Standing Finance Committee of the Madras Legislative Council held on the 9th December 1922.

IV

(1)

THE MADRAS HINDU RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS BILL, 1922—*cont.*

The consideration of the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Bill, 1922, was then resumed.

Diwan Bahadur T. N. Sivagnanam Pillai:—"Mr. President, I rise to support the Hindu Religious Endowments Bill introduced by the hon. the Raja of Panagal. More than a hundred years ago, the maladministration of our religious and charitable institutions attracted the attention of the Government and they were pleased to pass Regulation VII of 1817 for rectifying the defects in their administration then brought to notice. I should say that they succeeded. For, during the next 50 years we did not find any instance of any gross neglect or maladministration. But after the lapse of half a century some agitation was set on foot both in England and in India in connexion with what was said to be the Christian administration of a Hindu religious institution. That objection gained weight and it resulted in the passing of Act XX of 1863 under which the Board of Revenue was deprived of its powers of superintendence over religious institutions and committees of various kinds which were constituted at the time were invested with these powers. How this Act of 1863 has worked is within the knowledge of every member of this House and the general public also. It abounds with various defects and various irregularities, so much so that nobody has a good word to say about it. The principal defects in that Act have been set forth at length in paragraph 2 of the

* Vide Appendix A on page 1019 infra.